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AUTHOR Rosen, Pamela; Horne, Eleanor V.
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ABSTRACT

Brief annotations of currently available language development measures appropriate for use with preschool children as well as with lower elementary grade children (grades 1 through 3) are presented. The annotation provides information concerning the purpose of the test; the groups for which it is intended; test subdivisions or tested skills, behaviors, or competencies; administration; scoring; interpretation; and standardization. (CK)

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LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT TESTS

An Annotated Bibliography

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August 1971

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT TESTS

An Annotated Bibliography

Prepared by

Pamela Rosen

Assisted by

Eleanor V. Horne

Head Start Test Collection
Educational Testing Service

INTRODUCTION

This annotated bibliography attempts to list currently available language development measures. Language development skills are classified into the realms of production and comprehension. Subcategories of the former include writing and speaking, and of the latter, listening and reading. Instruments which broadly measure communication skills within each of these four subcategories are included. A variety of auditory, visual, and verbalization skills associated with the communication process are considered to be within these limits. Measures confined to a specific language skill, such as vocabulary, phonics, comprehension, articulation, or pronunciation, and instruments in which language skills are only one of the developmental skills measured, are excluded unless a reliable subtest can be used independently. Reading-readiness tests are also excluded.

Other criteria for selection were that the instruments be appropriate for preschool and lower elementary grade children (Grades 1-3) and that they can be administered by teachers or untrained personnel. Any specific administrator qualifications are cited. Unless otherwise stated, the tests are untimed.

The instruments described were found through a search of *Research in Education*, the *Current Index to Journals in Education*, and among the documents held by the Test Collection or Head Start Test Collection of the Educational Testing Service.

The grade table on page 4 lists the tests alphabetically, indicates the grades for which each instrument is considered suitable, and gives the page on which each annotation appears. A table classifying the tests by skills is also provided.

The main descriptive section conforms to normal bibliographic practice in listing the tests alphabetically by first author, followed by the test title, the source from which the instrument may be obtained, and the copyright date (indicated by a small c). The absence of a copyright date is not intended to suggest that the instrument is uncopyrighted. In a few cases, no individual author was noted; these instruments appear at the end of the bibliography.

The annotation provides information concerning the purpose of the test; the groups for which it is intended; test subdivisions or tested skills, behaviors, or competencies; administration; scoring; interpretation; and standardization.

Certain terminology and ground rules used in preparing the bibliography are explained below.

A. Test Title

Sometimes an instrument does not appear to have an "official" identifying label. In such cases, an appropriate name has been provided. When a measure is known by more than one name, the alternatives are indicated.

B. Age/Grade Range

The range should be considered as a guide only. Listed here is the age/grade range for which the measure is intended (as stated by the author), or the range from which data was obtained. However, a number of the instruments could probably be readily adapted for younger children, or for older children who are functioning below their chronological ages. Hence, the age/grade ranges listed may well be arbitrary and should not necessarily be viewed as ultimate limits.

C. Forms

If forms are not mentioned in an annotation, only one form of the test is available. Any variations are noted.

D. Timing

An instrument may be described as "timed," "untimed," or "paced." The latter means that the examiner reads the instructions and items to the examinee. When available, the approximate time required for administration is indicated.

E. Scoring

Unless otherwise indicated, scores are derived directly from the responses of the subject, usually by a summative process. The great majority of the tests are hand scored; any variations are noted.

F. Technical Data

In this area, only the kinds of norms available and the types of studies performed are reported. The content, results, and quality of the studies made are not indicated. If a reader finds a test of interest, he should examine the technical report in detail to determine whether that particular test is appropriate for his purposes.

Reliability studies show whether an instrument gives consistent results. Intra-scorer or intra-examiner reliability is the correlation between the results obtained when a single examiner scores the same set of tests more than once. Inter-scorer or inter-examiner reliability is the correlation between the results obtained when different examiners score the same set of tests. Odd-even, split-half, Kuder-Richardson 20, Kuder-Richardson 21, and Spearman-Brown correlations are all measures of internal consistency. A test-retest study indicates that the same form of the same test has been administered to the same group of examinees at two different times and the results correlated. When parallel forms of the same test have been given to a group of examinees and the results correlated, the correlation is called parallel form or inter-form reliability.

Validity studies indicate whether an instrument measures the skills, abilities, competencies, or traits which it purports to measure. One type of validity is concerned with the appropriateness of the test items for such measurement, according to some definition; for example, a statement of

instructional objectives, the psychological definition of a concept, etc. Such validity is called content or construct validity. Another type of validity is determined by the correlation between the scores on an instrument and some other external measure of the same quality or attribute. For example, in a concurrent validity study the results of two measures taken on the same group of examinees at approximately the same time are correlated; in a predictive validity study the scores from a given test are correlated with those of a different measure taken at a later date.

GRADE TABLE

	Pre	K	1	2	3	Pg.
Assessment of Children's Language Comprehension	x	x	x	x	x	7
Cooperative Primary Tests: Word Analysis Test			x	x	x	10
Dade County Test of Language Development	x	x	x	x	x	9
Dailey Language Facility Test	x	x	x	x	x	6
Dominion Individual Diagnostic Word Analysis Skills - Primary			x	x	x	11
Houston Test for Language Development	x	x	x			6
Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities	x	x	x	x	x	7
Parsons Language Sample	x	x	x	x	x	9
Picture Story Language Test				x	x	8
Preschool Language Scale	x	x	x	x	x	10
Riley Articulation and Language Test		x	x	x		9
Tests of Basic Experiences: Language Subtest	x	x	x			8
Verbal Language Development Scale	x	x	x	x	x	7

SKILLS TABLE

	Production Skills		Comprehension Skills		Pg.
	Speaking	Writing	Listening	Reading	
Assessment of Children's Language Comprehension			x		7
Cooperative Primary Tests: Word Analysis Test			x	x	10
Dade County Test of Language Development	x		x		9
Dailey Language Facility Test	x				6
Dominion Individual Diagnostic Word Analysis Skills - Primary	x			x	11
Houston Test for Language Development	x		x		6
Illinois Test of Psycho-linguistic Abilities	x		x	x	7
Parsons Language Sample	x		x		9
Picture Story Language Test		x			8
Preschool Language Scale	x		x		10
Riley Articulation and Language Test	x				9
Tests of Basic Experiences: Language Subtest			x	x	8
Verbal Language Development Scale	x				7

Crabtree, M., *The Houston Test for Language Development.*

From: Margaret Crabtree, 10133 Bassoon, Houston, Texas (c1958).

Establishes a basis for objectively evaluating language function in infants and children to 6 years of age. The instrument facilitates evaluation of the spontaneous language production of a child in the span of a testing period. The two parts of the test may be administered together or separately. The items, some of which are both productive and receptive, are grouped according to level of language development. Items representing the various aspects of language, from both the general categories of reception, conceptualization, expression, and the specific categories of melody, rhythm, accent, gesture, articulation, vocabulary, grammatical usage, and dynamic content, are included. These provide a Language Age Score. The test is untimed and requires approximately 30 minutes for completion. Administrators should have a basic knowledge of testing. Test results can be used, in conjunction with other relevant data, to diagnose language disorders. Norms and reliability coefficients are presented in the manual.

Dailey, J. T., *Dailey Language Facility Test.*

From: The Allington Corporation, 801 North Pitt Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 (c1966).

Designed to assess the ability to use oral language independently of vocabulary, information, pronunciation, and grammar, this instrument is individually administered to children aged 3 and older. The subject tells a story about or describes a series of pictures. Responses to each picture are scored on a 9-point scale according to detailed criteria. There are two scoring systems which may be used separately or in conjunction with each other. System I provides a measure of the child's ability to conceptualize and communicate in his chosen language, independent of standard English vocabulary, enunciation, information, or grammatical exactness. System II codes the errors or deviations from standard English pronunciation, or usage, and provides a diagnostic profile of the child's ability to speak standard English. The nine steps of the basic scale represent the stages in the child's development to full language maturity, thus the instrument may also be considered a test of ability to read at a later age. Special training is not required for the administration or scoring of the test. Norms are provided in the manual.

Foster, C. R., Giddan, J. J., & Stark, J., *Assessment of Children's Language Comprehension.*

From: Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 577 College Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94306 (c1969).

This scale was designed to diagnose the nature of a child's language development difficulty by determining the number of lexical items he can process. It enables the determination of levels at which language training should begin. The instrument is constructed on four levels. Level I involves one critical element. At this level, the child identifies common nouns, verbs, prepositions, and adjectives. Each level thereafter involves understanding relationships between additional critical elements, to the maximum of four at Level IV. The test is individually administered and consists of a series of 40 plates of 4 or 5 pictures and a recording sheet. The administrator reads an item and the child selects the appropriate picture. It assesses three major areas: core vocabulary development, comprehension of increasing number of lexical items, and consistency of words missed in a sequence. Since the scale measures a child's ability to understand without having to produce language, it can be successfully administered to children with severe articulation problems or with limited speech. Psychometric data was not available, but analysis of test data is in process.

Kirk, S. A., McCarthy, J., & Kirk, W., *Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities.*

From: University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Illinois 61801 · (c1968).

A systematic device which taps and differentiates facets of cognitive ability. This diagnostic test of communication abilities delineates areas of communication difficulties in children aged 2-10. Consists of twelve subtests which assess function at either the representational or the automatic level. Representational items measure the ability to comprehend, organize, and use visual and auditory symbols. Automatic subtests include Closure and Sequential Memory. The twelve subtests are designed to isolate defects in three processes of communication, two levels of language organization, and two channels of language input and output. Training is necessary for both the administration and scoring of the test. Tables of age norms and scaled scores are available in the manual.

Mecham, M. J., *Verbal Language Development Scale.*

From: American Guidance Service, Inc., Educational Test Bureau, 720 Washington Avenue, S. E., Minneapolis, Minnesota (c1959).

This scale, which is an extension of the communication portion of the *Vineland Social Maturity Scale,* assesses a child's verbal language maturity. It employs the informant-interview method of administration. The informant may be anyone who knows the child intimately. Each item is a description of some verbal behavior. The child's performance of each is rated. The total score is converted to "Language Age." Tentative normative scores, reliability, and validity data are available.

Moss, M. H., *Tests of Basic Experiences (TOBE): Language Subtest.*

From: CTB/McGraw Hill, Del Monte Research Park, Monterey, California 93940 (c1970).

TOBE consists of five standardized group tests. However, the *Language Subtest* may be used as an independent instrument. Assesses basic language concepts including vocabulary, sentence structure, verb tense, sound-symbol relationships, letter recognition, listening skills, and perception of the use of symbols. The test also includes items based upon a new approach in the measurement of language skills which uses synthetic or "nonsense" words. The child must derive their meaning from the context of the sentence in which they are used. The instrument is available in two levels, one for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children, and another for kindergarten and first grade children. Completion of the test requires approximately 25 minutes. Scores may be reported in percentile ranks, stanines, and standard scores. The derivation and interpretation of each method of scoring is explained in the manual. Discussion of reliability, validity and standardization is available in both the manual and the Bulletin of Technical Data. The instrument should be administered and used by persons with professional training in education or its equivalent.

Myklebust, H. R., *Picture Story Language Test.*

From: Grune & Stratton, Inc., 361 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016 (c1965).

Designed as a productive instrument for the developmental and diagnostic study of language in subjects aged 7 and older. Provides a scale for quantifying a child's facility with the written word and thereby provides a measure for this type of verbal behavior. Scale was standardized according to commonly accepted criteria for the study of human behavior. It is useful in establishing developmental levels in normal children and in diagnosing language disabilities. The child writes a story about a stimulus picture. The story is rated by three scales--Productivity (length of expression), Syntax (correctness), and Abstract-Concrete (content)--which are measures of the child's verbal facility. Norms for each scale are available in the manual. The test is administered individually or in small groups and requires approximately 30 minutes for completion. Training in the use of objective tests and the interpretation of test scores is necessary. Reliability data is presented in the manual.

Riley, G. D., *Riley Articulation and Language Test.*

From: Western Psychological Services, Box 775, Beverly Hills, California (c1966).

Designed to rapidly screen language function, this test can be individually administered in one to two minutes. The two subtests, Articulation and Sentence Repetition, provide Articulation Loss, Functional Articulation Scores and Language Loss, Functional Language Scores, respectively. A rating scale for Speech Intelligibility is included. The instrument was standardized on Kindergarten through Grade 2. Normative data is provided for boys and girls from low or middle socioeconomic groups. Children may be placed in at least three describable syndromes according to their *RALT* scores. Test-retest and inter-examiner reliability data is available. The examiner should have sufficient knowledge of articulation disorders and phonetics. As a diagnostic approach the test should be used only for preliminary probing.

Spradlin, J., *The Parsons Language Sample.*

From: Joseph Spradlin, 1612 Morgan, Parsons, Kansas 67357.

Developed to sample language behavior according to the Skinnerian system, the subtests include tact, echoic, intraverbal, echoic gesture, comprehension, intraverbal-gesture, and mand. The first three sample verbal behavior, the second three sample non-vocal communication, and the last subtest samples both vocal and non-vocal response. The instrument is individually administered, and is useful in predicting at least a limited range of non-test language behavior. Reliability coefficients and validity data are presented in the manual.

Taft, Jerome, & Others, *Dade County Test of Language Development.*

From: Dade County Board of Public Instruction, English Center, 235 N.W. 3rd Avenue, Miami, Florida (c1967-68).

Identifies occurrences of non-standard language features which may retard social, academic, or occupational mobility. The instrument consists of two assessment tests and two rating forms. Test I, Aural Comprehension, is receptive, diagnostic, and assesses students' responses to pictured situations following the presentation of an oral stimulus. It may be group administered. Test II, Oral Usage, is productive. The student responds orally to questions while his language patterns are recorded for future assessment. It should be individually administered and evaluated by personnel trained in linguistics. Psychometric data is not available at present.

Zimmerman, I. L., Steiner, V. G., & Evatt, R. L., *Preschool Language Scale.*

From: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., Columbus, Ohio (c1969).

Designed for use by child development specialists, speech therapists, teachers, and administrators with children of all ages who are assumed to be functioning at a preschool or primary language level. *PLS* is an experimental instrument to be used to assess language strengths and deficiencies. By diagnosing and isolating these areas of strengths and deficiencies, the scale aids in the development and evaluation of language programs. The instrument employs the natural dichotomy between auditory comprehension and verbal ability as the basis for construction. The two sections of the instrument correspond to this dichotomy. Auditory Comprehension determines the child's ability to receive auditory information and to indicate this reception with a meaningful non-verbal response. It measures recognition and comprehension of words, the stages of concrete and abstract thought, concept acquisition, and the ability to understand the grammatical features of the language. It precludes the need for verbalization. Verbal Ability assesses the child's ability to verbalize adequately as measured by his responses to a series of graded tasks. Subscores include vocabulary, verbal memory span, stages of concrete and abstract thought, concept acquisition, articulation, and the ability to apply grammar. A number of the items occur at more than one age level. Administration of each scale is discontinued at the point where the child fails all the items at a given age level. The instrument should be individually administered.

- - -, *Cooperative Primary Tests: Word Analysis Test.*

From: Cooperative Tests & Services, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey 08540 (c1967).

The battery, which consists of six tests, measures basic understanding of verbal and quantitative concepts. The *Word Analysis Test* assesses a child's understanding of phonetic and structural properties of words. It is available in two forms appropriate for use at the end of Grade 1, the beginning and end of Grade 2, and the beginning and end of Grade 3. Part I of the test employs oral questions with pictorial and word options, while Part II uses pictorial and word stimuli with word and letter options. The administrator works with the child on Part I while the child works alone on Part II. Forty minutes are required for completion of the 60 items. Norms are provided in the handbook.

- - -, *Dominion Innividual Diagnostic Word Analysis Skills - Primary.*

From: Department of Educational Research, Ontario College of Education, 371 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario (c1947).

Assesses an individual child's word recognition and analysis skills. It is not a survey test but enables a teacher to identify areas of weakness in these skills and to recommend a type of remedial work. The test consists of 100 word items providing Word Analysis Skills, Word Recognition, and Specific Sounding Errors subscores. The administrator notes and evaluates the analytic technique the child employs when confronted with an unfamiliar word. The test is individually administered and untimed. It is most appropriate for children in Grades 1 through 4 who demonstrate language difficulties. Training is not necessary to administer the test although the examiner should practice its administration prior to using it. Psychometric data was not available.